

# **Adult Education and Literacy**

## **Assessment Manual**

**This manual includes the  
Distance Education Policy**



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## **AEL Student Assessment Policy**

### **A Statement of Common Practice**

Standardized assessment plays a critical role in the educational experience and success of adult students. It provides the basis for personalized learning plans, creating engaging and relevant instruction, and measuring student progress. It also provides the evidence used to measure program, provider, and State efficacy. Organizational leadership at the provider, center, and classroom level is responsible for managing assessment administration, including adherence to State policy. In order to ensure consistent assessment administration practices across the statewide Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) system, this manual will inform operational decisions by AEL providers until revised by the Vermont Agency of Education (AOE).

### **Assessment Policy**

Vermont Adult Education and Literacy (VAEL) providers are required by Federal rules to baseline assess 100% of students who receive 12 hours or more of instruction in the State's adult education program with a test that the United States Department of Education (US DOE) Secretary has determined is suitable for use in the National Reporting System (NRS). The State requires that skill level assessments in reading, language, math, and/or ESL must be administered to all students within a 45day timeframe. In addition, at least 45% of students with baseline assessments must be progress assessed. Progress assessments are crucial to demonstrating Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs) and are reported to the US DOE.

An individual who does not speak English, and therefore cannot be assessed with the BEST Plus 2.0, should be assigned to the ESL NRS level "Low Beginning" and formally assessed when English language acquisition warrants.

Reasonable accommodations during assessment may be provided to any individual with a documented disability. By law ([Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)), students with one or more disabling conditions, who would be otherwise able to participate, must be provided accommodations that permit access to testing.

An accommodation is any technique that alters the academic setting or environment in some way but does not change the content of required work. Accommodations do not: alter the content of assignments, give students an unfair advantage, or, in the case of assessments, change what a test measures. They do make it possible for students with disabilities to access an assessment and/or show what they know without being impeded by their disability.

Once a person has been formally diagnosed with a disability, the student may request accommodations if that disability is determined to impede their ability to access the assessment or testing environment. For students receiving Special Education services, the [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#) states that a person's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team must decide which accommodations are appropriate for them. Any appropriate accommodations must be written into a student's IEP or 504 Plan, and this documentation must be maintained by the AEL provider. For detailed information about accommodations, including specific guidelines from each assessment's publisher, see the AEL Accommodations Manual.

Assessment testing data must be entered into the AEL database, the Vermont Adult Education Information System, at least every two weeks per the State’s grant agreement. Programming in the database prevents data entry errors for out-of-range assessment scores and includes required fields and error messages. Local providers are responsible for ensuring data accuracy by correcting errors in a timely way. Reports create easy access for review by local and State staff.

Baseline/Progress Assessment – Baseline assessments will be administered to 100% of students who receive 12 hours or more of instruction. In addition, re-baseline assessments are required for those students who exited for two years or more from services, even if the Educational Functioning Level (EFL) has not expired. EFLs are valid for the program year [July 1 – June 30] in which the assessment (baseline or progress) is given and in the two program years that follow. At least 45% of students who have been baseline assessed will, at an appropriate interval, be progress assessed in order to determine educational gains. *Progress assessment will be considered valid if the student has received 40 hours of instruction and a minimum of 31 days have passed since the previous assessment.* When a valid progress assessment is administered, the EFL will be re-set. The data acquired from baseline and progress assessments will be used for instructional and goal setting purposes. In addition, assessment data may be used for National Reporting System (NRS) purposes and/or for State reporting purposes as described below.

For **State reporting** purposes, assessments may include those in the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education in the areas of reading, writing, speaking and listening, and math. Those assessments approved for State reporting purposes include the following (this list is subject to change):

**Assessment**

Accuplacer  
BEST Plus 2.0  
CASAS Life and Work, Life Skills  
TABE CLAS-E  
TABE 11/12  
WorkKeys

**Skill area**

Reading, Writing & Math  
Speaking & Listening (ESL only)  
Reading, Math (ESL only)  
Writing (ESL only)  
Reading, Language, & Math  
Workplace skills: reading, writing, math,  
and understanding charts and graphs

Educational Functioning Level (EFL) gains and National Reporting System (NRS) gains are federal measures that must comply with federal policy. Only assessments approved for this use under Federal policy and adopted by the Vermont Agency of Education can be used to determine an EFL or an NRS level in the specific skill areas of reading, writing, speaking, or math. The EFL is a measure of functional ability as determined by a student's *lowest score* in any of the skill areas. This is a state requirement. EFL gains in *any skill area* may count toward a Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) according to NRS rules. These requirements should not limit the breadth of goal setting, which should also inform instructional decisions.

**Federally-approved** assessments that can generate EFL and NRS levels and adopted for this use by the Vermont Agency of Education include the following (this list is subject to change):

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>Skill area</b>
BEST Plus 2.0	Speaking & Listening (ESL only)
CASAS Life and Work	Reading (ESL only)
TABE CLAS-E	Writing (ESL only)
TABE 11/12 (paper-based)	Reading, Language, & Math
TABE 11/12 (online)	Reading, Language, & Math

**Compliance with the following rules will determine validity of assessment for the purposes described.**

A student is considered to have a valid **baseline assessment** for the purpose of determining instructional needs, and therefore eligible for inclusion in **State reporting**, if all of the following are true:

- The student is a member of the report population (open enrollment during the reporting period and services received according to the selection parameters).
- An appropriate pre-screening mechanism (i.e., Locator test) has been used prior to assessment to determine which instrument and level is most appropriate.
- As long as the EFL has not expired (see above), the baseline assessment will remain valid even if the student has not received services for 90 days or more.
- The assessment is administered by a staff person trained and certified for the assessment instrument.
- The assessment is a skill level assessment or skill diagnostic assessment.
- The assessment is in one of the skill areas of reading, language, writing, math, or speaking and listening, and produces a skill level record.

A student is considered to have a valid **baseline assessment** for the purpose of establishing an EFL baseline, and therefore eligible for inclusion in **federal NRS reporting**, if all of the following are true:

- The student is a member of the report population (open enrollment during the reporting period and services received according to the selection parameters).
- An appropriate pre-screening mechanism (i.e., Locator test) has been used prior to assessment to determine which instrument and level is most appropriate.

- As long as the EFL has not expired (see above), the baseline assessment will remain valid even if the student has not received services for 90 days or more.
- The assessment is administered by a staff person trained and certified for that assessment instrument.
- The assessment is a skill level assessment.
- The assessments for ABE/ASE students are in each of the three content areas of reading, language, and math and produce a skill level record using the TABE 11/12.
- For ESL students, the available assessments are in reading, writing, or speaking and listening, and produce a skill level record. There is only one skill area assessment required for ESL students. Once an ESL student has progressed to NRS 6 ESL and is ready to transition to ABE/ASE the student must be assessed in ABE/ASE reading, language, and math skill areas using the TABE 11/12 as described above.

A student is considered to have a valid **progress assessment** for the purpose of establishing educational gains, and therefore eligible for inclusion in **both State and Federal NRS reporting**, if all of the following are true.

- The student has a qualifying baseline assessment as described above respectively for State and/or Federal reporting.
- The progress assessment uses the same instrument and measures the same skill (i.e., reading, language, or math) as the baseline assessment.
- The assessment is administered by a staff person trained and certified for that assessment instrument.
- The student has participated in a minimum of 40 hours of instructional service and a minimum of 31 days have elapsed since the paired baseline assessment was administered.
- If the baseline assessment has a form associated with it, the progress assessment must use a different form:
  - TABE 11/12 progress assessment may not use a lower level than the paired baseline assessment; for example, progress assessment using 11M is invalid if the baseline assessment used was 11D.
  - CASAS Life and Work progress assessment may not use a lower level or form; for example, progress assessment using Level A is invalid if baseline assessment used Level B or higher. Progress assessments may become the new baseline assessment if the previous baseline assessment has expired.

Assessment materials are purchased by the AEL providers directly from the respective publishers. It is allowable for State funds to be used to purchase approved assessments when included in a budget as part of a grant agreement approved by the Vermont Agency of Education.

## Paper and Online Assessments

The AOE is allowing the TABE 11/12 paper and online baseline and progress assessments to act as matched pairs retroactive to July 1, 2019. All students entering AEL services must be assessed using the TABE 11/12 **online**. The default to using online assessments is necessary to prepare for the possibility of learning center closures due to an emergency and to ensure student access

to assessments during times of uncertain and limited in-person interactions. The use of online assessments is also a fundamental issue of equity in a rural state with geographic disparities and barriers for learners. Finally, teaching adult learners how to learn and assess online is also a fundamental component of being a literate, digital citizen in an evolving and global economy.

The exception to using the online version of TABE 11/12 occurs when the Locator indicates use of the Literacy form (L) level, which is only available in the paper version. When the Locator indicates a student is ready to take the E or higher assessments, the AEL provider shall evaluate the student's digital literacy skills and ability to take an online assessment prior to assessing the student. AEL providers should prioritize providing sufficient instruction to prepare all students (in advance) to develop the digital skills necessary to access the online tests.

### **Virtual Proctoring of Assessments**

The availability of online assessments does not mean that all students must be virtually proctored when taking the tests. It is still permitted to administer an online assessment in person. The AOE allows virtual proctoring for the TABE 11/12 assessments as an alternative to in-person proctoring per the [Virtual Test Proctoring Procedures for Continuity of Learning](#). The decision to virtually or in-person proctor a test shall be made at the center level, in compliance with [Vermont Department of Health guidance](#) for businesses and non-profits (and with practices informed by [COVID-19 Guidance/Recommendations for Vermont Schools](#)), and determined by such things as the student's preference, the student's digital literacy skills, connectivity and equipment access, and ability to attend a local learning center. Per the publisher's guidance, the TABE Locator does not currently require proctoring.

### **WorkKeys**

Where the WorkKeys assessments are made available, testing opportunities are to be offered on a regular basis as appropriate to local demand. VAEL learning centers will also provide instruction designed to prepare students for the WorkKeys assessments and may offer the WorkKeys certifications only in compliance with the guidelines of the publisher, ACT, and only using assessment proctors who have successfully completed the necessary training and are therefore trained as WorkKeys test administrators. The examining entity is authorized to collect fees for test administration, which is set by the Vermont Agency of Education. Currently, the fee is established at \$22 for each of the tests.

### **Conclusion**

Please read and comply with this information carefully. The uniform implementation of assessments allow for comparability across programs. The Vermont Agency of Education uses assessment data to understand student need, to monitor program efficacy, and to measure program performance.



# Distance Education Policy

## Purpose

The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) has developed the following distance education policy in recognition that innovations in the delivery of distance education (also referred to as distance learning) may effectively engage, motivate and retain many Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) students.

## Introduction

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's (WIOA) thirteen considerations for the selection of AEL providers emphasizes that adult education programs are to “. . . effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services and systems lead to improved performance.” – WIOA, Sec. 231 (e)(7)

“Distance education,” “distance learning,” and “remote learning” are terms often used interchangeably. Distance education is defined (see Definitions section below) in the National Reporting System's Technical Assistance Guide. For the purposes of Federal reporting the term “distance education” will be used as a formal reference, but “distance learning” or “remote learning” are also acceptable ways to describe the program and activities on a daily basis and in promotional materials that local AEL providers may develop.

Distance learning can offer the flexibility some adult education students need to access a rigorous education when juggling multiple demands on their time – such as work and/or family obligations – or navigating barriers outside of their control.

Integrating distance learning into AEL instructional programs will support:

- the delivery of educational services to individuals who cannot or prefer not to receive traditional in-person instruction;
- extended learning opportunities and/or differentiated instruction for students already enrolled in AEL in-person programs; and,
- local program preparedness in case in-person interactions are not possible due to a state of emergency.

Through technical assistance, the Vermont AOE will support local AEL providers to continue maximizing technology resources so that students receive sufficiently rigorous educational services that meet their individual needs.

## Definitions

**Distance Education:** Formal learning activity where students and instructors are separated by geography, time, or both for the majority of the instructional period. Distance learning materials are delivered through a variety of media including, but not limited to, print, audio recording,

videotape, broadcasts, computer software, web-based programs and other online technology. Teachers support distance learners through communication via mail, telephone, e-mail or online technologies and software -*Technical Assistance Guide for Performance Accountability under WIOA, National Reporting System for Adult Education.*

**Traditional Learners:** Learners who receive the majority of their instructional hours through in-person instruction.

**Distance Learners:** Learners who receive the majority of their instructional hours through distance learning.

**Hybrid learning:** This instructional model delivers content and instruction both in-person and remotely to students. May also be referred to as “blended learning.” A learner who participates in hybrid learning will be considered a distance learner for NRS purposes only if the majority of instructional hours credited to the learner are considered distance learning contact and/or proxy hours as opposed to in-person contact hours.

### **Student Contact Hours**

In-person contact hours and distance learning hours will be recorded separately. The determination of the learner’s status as a traditional or distance learner will be made at the end of the year and will be based on which category of hours comprises over 50% of the learner’s total instructional time. The learner’s hours in both traditional and distance situations will be included in NRS reports under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

**Contact hours:** *Hours of instruction or instructional activity that the participant receives from the program.* Instructional activity includes any program-sponsored activity designed to promote learning in the program curriculum, such as classroom instruction, assessment, tutoring, or participation in a learning lab. Time spent on assessment can be counted only if the assessment is designed to inform placement decisions, assess progress, or inform instruction. Time used simply to administer tests, such as the GED tests, cannot be considered instructional activity. - *Technical Assistance Guide for Performance Accountability under WIOA, National Reporting System for Adult Education.*

**Contact hours for distance learning:** *Synchronous time spent instructing the learner.* Contact hours for distance learners include two-way interaction between an AEL provider instructor and learner(s) by telephone, video, teleconference, or other online communication where learner(s) and provider staff are able to interact and through which learner identity is verifiable. Contact hours are reimbursable for students special group enrolled in the HSCP, whether provided in-person or through distance learning.

**Proxy hours:** Synchronous time a non-AEL source spends instructing the learner and/or asynchronous time a learner spends independently engaged with distance learning activities. Proxy hours must be rounded to the nearest quarter hour and may be counted as described

below. Proxy hours do not represent direct contact hours with AEL providers and, therefore, are not reimbursed through the HSCP.

- **Clock Time Model** – assigns contact hours based on time a learner is engaged in a curriculum program that tracks actual time on task. Approved Clock Time Model platforms for course-based distance learning are:
  - **Vermont Virtual Learning Cooperative (VTVLC)** – This may include traditional or on-demand courses.
  - **High School Completion Program (HSCP) partnering high school distance learning course** – The course must be taught by a teacher at the partnering high school and included in the student’s HSCP Personalized Learning Plan (PLP). In addition, the teacher must be able to track the time the student is engaged in the distance learning activities and provide the documentation of those hours to the AEL provider.
- **Learner Mastery Model** – assigns a fixed number of contact hours for unit or lesson mastery based on passing a unit or lesson test. Note regarding student services supported by the High School Completion Program: Learner Mastery Model proxy hours may only be applied for students unenrolled from school. Approved Learner Mastery Models are:
  - **ACT WorkKeys: National Career Readiness Certificate** – 3 proxy hours may be entered for each of the three assessments that the student passes AND achieves a score with a minimum of Level 4 on each WorkKeys assessment – Graphic Literacy, Applied Math, and Workplace documents for a total of 9 possible proxy hours.
    - Prerequisite: current Educational Functioning Level.
    - Required documentation to be placed in student file: dated copy of identifying screen shot or hard copy of “passed” status for each assessment or of certificate achieved.
  - **TABE Academy subject level mastery** – log proxy hours when a student obtains 80% or higher mastery of all lessons within a subject area. For example, Language Level E includes 5 lessons. When all lessons are passed, the time on task to complete the level may be recorded in the database as proxy hours.
    - Prerequisite: current Educational Functioning Level using the TABE 11/12.
    - Required documentation to be placed in the student file: dated copy of the Overview Report, which includes “Mastery” of skills with scores, “Progress” toward completion of levels, and “Study Time”. If student passes more than one level, a copy of the Student Summary that shows time on task for each level must be placed in the student file.
  - **Burlington English lesson mastery** – log proxy hours for “Away from School” time when a student completes a lesson 100% **and** obtains 80% or higher

mastery. (“At School” time must represent direct contact hours provided by AEL staff and be logged in the database as direct instruction, rather than proxy.)

- Prerequisite: current Educational Functioning Level for ESL.
- Required documentation to be placed in student file: dated copy of “class progress” page, which shows these columns:
  - lesson title (i.e., “Listen and Speak: Achieving Goals”)
  - total hours and minutes spent
  - “At School” (classtime) spent
  - “Away from School” (independent) time spent
  - “Best Score” (must be 80% or higher)
  - “Completion” (must be 100%).
- **Essential Education’s GED Academy** –log proxy hours for “Time on Task” when a student passes a lesson or quiz with 80% or higher mastery.
  - Prerequisite: current Educational Functioning Level
  - Required documentation to be placed in student file: dated copy of “student summary report”, which shows these relevant columns:
    - Lesson title (i.e., Square Roots or Exponents and Roots Unit Quiz)
    - Content type (Lesson or Unit Quiz)
    - Time on Task
    - Score
    - Date submitted
- **Khan Academy** – proxy hours approved for skill level for each of “Proficient” (80-99 points) or “Mastered” (100 points) on each activity within content areas that are aligned with Vermont’s state standards: math, reading and language arts, and science.
  - Prerequisite: current Educational Functioning Level.
  - Required documentation to be placed in the student file: copy of the Activity Log, which includes these columns:
    - Activity
    - Date
    - Level
    - Time
- **IXL** – log proxy time spent for students who earn at least 80 (Proficient skill level) for each skill in the content areas that are aligned with Vermont’s state standards: math, language arts, science, and social studies.
  - Prerequisite: current Educational Functioning Level.
  - Required documentation to be placed in the student file: copy of the Skill Summary which lists:
    - Skill
    - Smartscore (must be 80 or higher),
    - Questions Answered
    - Time Spent
    - Last Practiced (this will be the date of reaching 80 points)

## Selecting VTVLC Courses

Through the Vermont Agency of Education's grant with VTVLC, AEL providers have access to the traditional online courses. On demand courses are also available from [VTVLC for a fee](#), which may be supported with High School Completion Program funding for those students assessing at a minimum of NRS 4 in reading, language, and math on the TABE 11/12, and who have a goal to obtain a high school diploma, and are participating in the HSCP. The HSCP partner high school may also be able to support the cost of on demand courses for those students enrolled in school.

Careful consideration should be given to assist the learner in selecting the course level that will maximize learning and skills attainment successfully and advance them toward their secondary, postsecondary and/or career goals. Local AEL providers should conduct an assessment of students' digital literacy skills and provide necessary services to improve the student's ability to effectively use technology and successfully access online VTVLC courses.

AEL providers are strongly encouraged to utilize VTVLC's "To Go" Canvas Learning Management System which provides instructors with access to the standards-based course catalog content, tools for designing courses, and a solution for delivering distance and hybrid learning activities in a secure environment. VTVLC To Go is free to AEL providers.

## AEL Activities

**AEL activities** that are standards-based and may be entered into the database include:

- Academic content below the postsecondary level: English Language Acquisition, Mathematics, and English Language Arts.
- Vermont's Education Quality Standards Transferable Skills: communication, collaboration, creativity, innovation, inquiry, problem solving, use of technology.

## Exclusions

All courses and instruction that count as contact hours (in-person or distance learning) or proxy hours must be AEL activities. The activities described below are excluded from AEL activities and may not be entered into the AEL database or counted toward the required 40 hours of instruction between NRS assessments for AEL students.

- Courses in physical education, foreign languages, art, or psychology for example, are not AEL activities.
- AEL activities must be below the postsecondary level, therefore dual enrollment courses taken at higher education institutions are also excluded.
- Both secondary-level elective and postsecondary level courses may fulfill a requirement as outlined in the student's HSCP PLP though they may not meet the Federal requirements as an AEL activity.

- AEL providers should consult with the Vermont AOE if uncertain about whether particular academic content would be considered an AEL activity.

### **Assessments and Distance Learning Hours**

Students enrolled in distance education programs must be tested using the same instruments and following the same procedures as all other students. Qualifying distance learning contact and proxy hours may count in the 40-hour interval between assessments as described in this federally-approved assessment manual.

## Assessment Instrument Training Requirements

This is a guide to required AEL assessment-related trainings.

Overall objectives for this approach:

- Provide an understanding of the purposes of assessment (formative, diagnostic, and summative) in adult education;
- Provide a practical understanding of the proper procedures for using our current slate of approved standardized assessment instruments.

### Training Requirement #1: Basics

Required of whom: AEL staff who have assessment duties and who work directly with students, and managers.

What is required: Successful completion of the course “Introduction to Assessment for Adult Basic Education”.

By when: Complete at least once in career within six months of initial hire.

- It is an online course facilitated by a LINCS instructor, with specific start and end dates, for 12 hours of professional development credit. You will need to have created a LINCS account.
- This course is scheduled approximately every six months.
- Notice of course schedule and open registration will be sent via the Didja\_know listserv.
- Send proof of successful completion (i.e., attach copy of certificate) to [Linda Moreno](#).

Course description:

#### Introduction to Assessment for Adult Basic Education

This online course is designed for teachers, program administrators, and professional development providers who want to understand the present landscape of assessment in Adult Basic Education. Participants will be introduced to LINCS and its resources, including the online assessment community where staff will post an activity as a culminating experience of this course. The intent of this course is to draw on participants’ current understanding and practice of assessment, introduce new information, and provide opportunities for to reflect on and improve their own practice with assessment.

The objectives for the course are to:

- learn the appropriate use of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment;
- identify stakeholders, and consider which assessment type might best suit student needs;
- understand the importance of involving students in assessment and of having students establish their own goals;
- identify ways to conduct diagnostic or formative assessment in the classroom;

- understand the importance of aligning assessments and instruction with student goals; and,
- become familiar with LINCS and what resources it has to offer.

## **Training Requirement #2: Formative assessment**

Required of whom: all AEL instructors.

What is required: Successfully complete one course on formative assessment. Depending on primary teaching assignment, choose a course with a focus on English language students, ABE writing, OR ABE math.

By when: Complete at least one of the formative assessment courses at least once in career within six months of initial hire.

- They are offered online within the LINCS Learning Portal in the formats as described below. You will need to have created a LINCS account.
- If a course is being offered and is open to Vermont AEL staff, a notice will be sent via the Didja\_know listserv.
- Send proof of successful completion (i.e., attached copy of certificate) to [Linda Moreno](#).

Course descriptions:

NOTE: The Formative Assessment to Inform Quality ESL Instruction course is not currently available through LINCS. The AOE is working to identify a replacement course.

### **Teaching Excellence in Adult Literacy (TEAL): Formative Assessment (6 hours) (Choose Writing OR Math)**

Formative assessment refers to both the formal and the informal processes that teachers and students use collaboratively to gather evidence of student learning for the purpose of improving the learning. Formative assessment occurs *while the learning is taking place*, as opposed to summative assessment that typically occurs at the end of a learning unit or course to determine what the student has learned. Formative assessment is a *process*, not a one-time event; it is assessment *for* learning, rather than assessment *of* learning, as with summative assessment. By the end of this course, participants will be able to define formative assessment and its benefits for classroom instruction; describe strategies for using formative assessment in the adult education classroom; and identify a goal for using one or more formative assessment strategies.

TEAL: Formative Assessment is an online course facilitated by an instructor, with specific start and end dates.

## **Training Requirement #3: Instrument-specific**



Required of whom: Staff who need to administer specific standardized assessment instruments. At least one staff member per full-service learning center must be trained to administer the TABE and CASAS. At least one staff member per AEL provider must be trained to administer the TABE CLAS-E and BEST Plus 2.0. Each provider must maintain an adequate number of staff who can administer assessments.

What is required: Take certification training, in the specific standardized assessment instrument(s) that you will administer to students, and pass the associated quiz, on the schedule required.

When/where: Face-to-face or virtual sessions on locally planned schedule.

- TABE 11/12, CASAS, and TABE CLAS-E training will be provided by local AEL staff who have completed the Train the Trainer professional development module provided by the AOE. Certification lasts three years. At expiration, re-take the certification training. (This is true as long as the instrument is valid.)
- BEST Plus 2.0 New Test Administrator Training is a 6-hour training offered virtually approximately annually, sponsored by the Vermont AOE.
- BEST Plus 2.0 Refresher Training is a separate half-day face-to-face event, required for each certified administrator every two years and sponsored by the AOE.

#### **Training Requirement #4: Annual general assessment and NRS updates**

Required of whom: All AEL staff with assessment duties (i.e., anyone working directly with students, and managers).

- What is required: Annual assessment and National Reporting System (NRS) updates webinar.
- When/where: Each year staff must successfully complete the annual NRS refresher, offered annually via video conference/webinar.

**Questions about assessment practices, trainings, or requirements?** Contact the AEL team at: [AOE.AdultEducation@vermont.gov](mailto:AOE.AdultEducation@vermont.gov)

## Tracking Chart for AEL Assessments

It is recommended that staff use this chart to document that they have met the requirements.

Staff Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Primary Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Training requirement	Applicable to me?	Due date for completion	Date completed	Certificate sent to AOE?	Next recertification due
<b>1: Basics</b>	Yes/no	Within 6 months of hire:		---	N/A
<b>2: Formative assessment</b>	Yes/no If yes, course chosen:	Within 6 months of hire:		---	N/A
<b>3: Specific instruments</b>					
<i>TABE 11/12</i>	Yes/no			---	In 3 years from last completion:
<i>CASAS</i>	Yes/ no			---	In 3 years from last completion:
<i>TABE CLAS-E</i>	Yes/no			---	In 3 years from last completion:
<i>BEST Plus 2.0</i>	Yes/no			---	Every two years. Next Refresher to be held in the spring of 2024. Those newly certified in 2023 will need to take the 2024 refresher and then every two years thereafter.
<b>4: Annual general assessment &amp; NRS updates</b>	Yes/no			---	Annually:

## Baseline and Progress Testing Timeframes

For the approved assessments listed above, refer to the following chart for recommended baseline and progress testing timeframes from the publishers. Please read and comply with this information carefully. The database system is programmed to disallow assessments that are not in compliance.

Test Name	Publisher Recommended Pre & Post Testing Time Frames	Contact/Notes
<b>ACT/Work Keys</b>	We recommend that the learner be involved in regular instruction that is offered by the institution (a semester or quarter course.)	<a href="#">ACT</a> customer care: 319-337-1270 Accommodations: 319-337-1332
<b>Basic English Skills Test (BEST) Plus 2.0</b>	<p><b>60 hours minimum; 80-100 hours recommended.</b></p> <p>If the hours for a course of instruction exceed the recommended number of hours, post-testing may most appropriately take place at the end of the instructional session.</p> <p>Because program-related factors such as intensity of instruction, class size, teacher training, and experience, and use of appropriate curricula and materials will affect language learning proficiency gains, programs should consider these factors when determining timing for pre- and post-testing.</p>	<p><a href="#">Center for Applied Linguistics</a> Elsa Fraser <a href="mailto:efraser@cal.org">efraser@cal.org</a></p>

Test Name	Recommended Pre & Post Testing Time Frames	Contact/Notes
<b>CASAS</b>	<p><b>40 hours minimum; 70-100 hours recommended</b></p> <p>Allow exceptions for courses with different schedules and intensity, e.g., allow more time for courses that meet infrequently or not intensively and for very intensive courses wait longer than the recommended number of hours to post-test.</p> <p>Programs offering high intensity courses (e.g., class meets more than 15 hours per week) may choose to test at the end of a semester, term, quarter, or other substantial block of instruction, even though the instructional intervention is more than 100 hours of instruction.</p> <p>Programs offering low intensity courses with less than 70 hours in a semester, quarter, term, or other block of instruction, may choose to post-test at the end of the instructional period.</p> <p>Programs may choose to assess students who indicate they are leaving the program before the scheduled post-test time, to maximize collection of paired test data.</p>	<p>From <a href="#">Linda Taylor</a>, Director of Assessment Development, <a href="#">CASAS</a> 800-255-1036, ext. 186</p>

Test Name	Recommended Pre & Post Testing Time Frames	Contact/Notes
<b>TABE, Forms 11 and 12</b>	<p>CTB/McGraw-Hill recommends 50-60 hours of instruction when testing with an alternate form (e.g., 11M to 12M) for students that test into NRS Levels 1-4 (ABE) with a minimum of 40 hours.</p> <p>For students testing into NRS Levels 5 and 6 (ASE Low and High) 30-59 hours of instruction is recommended.</p> <p>If the pre- and posttest are with the same level and use the same form: 60-80 hours.</p> <p>DRC/CTB suggests the pre- and post-test guidelines as best practices recommendations based upon practitioner feedback.</p> <p>The purpose for assessing with TABE 11 &amp; 12 or TABE CLAS-E will also have an impact on the implementation of these recommendations.</p> <p><b>DRC/CTB discourages random and frequent testing as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable or spurious scores.</b></p> <p>Instructional intervention between testing periods is strongly recommended to maximize gain.</p> <p>Proper use of the Locator Test as a determinant of appropriate content level testing is also strongly recommended (NOTE: REQUIRED by State) and is an integral part of the testing process.</p>	<p><a href="#">Mike Johnson</a> National Adult Education Director <a href="#">Data Recognition Corp</a> - CTB 630-995-6712</p>

Test Name	Recommended Pre & Post Testing Time Frames	Contact/Notes
<b>TABE CLAS-E</b>	<p>DRC/CTB recommends 50-60 hours of instruction when testing with an alternate form (i.e., A2 to B2) for students that test into NRS Levels 1-4 (ABE) and ESL levels 1-6 with a minimum of 40 hours.</p> <p>For students testing into NRS Levels 5 and 6 (ASE Low and High) 30-59 hours of instruction are recommended.</p> <p>If the pre- and post-test are with the same level and use the same form: 60-80 hours.</p> <p><b>CTB discourages random and frequent testing as it will not present valid gain scores and could create a practice effect, thus producing questionable or spurious scores.</b></p> <p>Instructional intervention between testing periods is strongly recommended to maximize gain.</p> <p>Proper use of the Locator Test as a determinant of appropriate content level testing is also strongly recommended (NOTE: REQUIRED by State) and is an integral part of the testing process.</p>	<p><a href="#">Mike Johnson</a> National Adult Education Director Data Recognition Corp - CTB 630-995-6712</p>

## Assessment Types

**Table 1: Skill Level Assessments**

Assesses student abilities in a skill by using a state approved standardized instrument that generates an NRS/skill level and an Educational Functioning Level (EFL).

Instrument	Skills	Population
Best Plus 2.0	Speaking and listening	ESL only
TABE 11/12	Reading, Language, Math	ABE/ASE
TABE CLAS-E	Writing	ESL only
CASAS Life and Work	Reading	ESL only

**Table 2: Special Needs Learning Inventories**

A structured assessment process used to determine disability assessments and/or to identify special learning accommodations that might be helpful for the student.

Instrument	Skills
Payne Checklist or Learning Needs Inventory	(None)

**Table 3: Skill Diagnostic Assessments**

These assessments may be used to diagnose student strength and weaknesses in skills by using standardized assessment instruments that do not generate an NRS skill level. Progress is measured by comparing changes in scores.

Instrument	Skills	Population
Accuplacer	Reading, Writing, Math	ASE
Adult Diagnostic Reading Inventory	Reading	All
Basic Reading Inventory	Reading	ABE
Diagnostic Assessments of Reading	Reading	All
Roswell Chall	Reading: word analysis	ABE: NRS 1-3
SPL (Student Performance Levels)	Speaking and listening	ESL only
Stieglitz Reading Inventory	Reading	ABE
WADE	Reading: spelling	ABE, ASE
WorkKeys	Workplace Documents, Applied Math, Graphic Literacy	ASE
GED	Reasoning through Language arts, Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies	ASE
Student Achievement in Reading (STAR)	Reading: Alphabetics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension	ABE: NRS 3-4